## WINTER CARE FOR HIBISCUS IN NORTH & CENTRAL FLORIDA

So, Old Man Winter is at hand again and I presume that all preliminary precautions have been taken as to wood hardening applications of 0-10-10 or whatever you have found available in that catagory. You have read so often of this phase that I will not repeat except to say that it can be continued through December and January.

Cold causes dehydration, so when it is indicated, get out and water your plants before, but not immediately after, low termperature. If you plants are defoliated then hold back on the water.

If no special cover is made, then before the cold, mound up as you would for young citrus, substantially well above the graft and when it warms up agian, kick it down.

Should your hibiscus be grouped, and you can stand the cost, have several small size grove heaters scattered which will save you some real headaches.

If you have a large number of plants in cans, then you can't beat a fram of 4 mil poly and a heater, but it must be WELL ventilated when warm days are at hand or fungus will be at hand also.

Don't cut off any damaged wood. Leave it until spring trimming, because you may get new tender growth too early and then you will have trouble.

A new wrinkle - for sized plants in the ground. First, get some croker sacks (burlap bags to you) and have open at the top and bottom. Slide over your plant and bury the lower end of the sack in the ground. When the cold is about to strike, wrap the lower stalk with newspaper and tie. Then partially fill the sack with soil and tie it up high on the main stem. Of course when the cold is past, all this must be undone. It is the best outside protection possible. It sounds like work but you should have those plants in good shape by spring.

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Let's consider frost for a moment. Frost can form at temperatures up to 42° when the conditions are right. Up comes the sun and your foliage is burned. I know it's tough to get up early on cold mornings, but if frost is forming by 6:30 to 7:00, then hose down with a fine spray or sprinkler until well after the sun has come up and you see that no more frost is forming. It will give you a good appetite for bacon, eggs and coffee when you come in, as well as helping your plants.

Enough of this chatter - be seeing you.

- B. L. Barling.

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Old accountants never die - - -
they just lose their balance.

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"Oh what a lovely cow," cooed the cute young city wife. "But why hasn't it any horns?"

"There are many reasons," the farmer replied quietly. "Some cows don't get horns till later in life. Others have them removed. Still others are born without them. But the reason this cow has no horns is because it's a horse."

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"Your hair needs cutting badly," remarked the barber.

"It does not," exclaimed the customer as he sat in the chair. "It needs cutting nicely. You cut it badly last time."

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The about-to-be-divorced husband was trying once more. "You used to say there was something about me that you liked."

She: "There was, but you spent it!"